

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4701

JOINT EMBASSY/MILGP MESSAGE

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, CI

SUBJECT: MAAG REQUIREMENT STUDY

REFS: (A) STATE 119079, (B) SANTIAGO 3893 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: IN ADDITION TO THE WORLDWIDE RESTRICTIONS ON MAAGS AND MILGPS, CHILE PRESENTS SPECIAL AND EVEN MORE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS. FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE ANY KIND OF A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE USG AND THE GOC, WHETHER INVOLVING FMS CREDITS, GRANT TRAINING OR SALES, IS GOING TO BE SUBJECTED TO THE MOST SEVERE SCRUTINY IN THE US. I BELIEVE THAT THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF OUR MILGP IS JUSTIFIED, BOTH BECAUSE OF ITS ASSISTANCE IN POLITICAL ACCESS TO THIS MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND BECAUSE OF ITS MILITARY SALES CASE LOAD. HOWEVER, SUCH PRESENCE IS ONLY JUSTIFIED IF PRESENT MILGP PERSONNEL ARE REDUCED 50 PERCENT TO EIGHT POSITIONS, GOING TO SEVEN WHEN AN F-5 INSTRUCTOR PILOT DEPARTS IN TWO YEARS (JUNE 1978). THIS STAFFING CONFORMS TO THE REDUCED WORKLOAD AND PERMITS US TO MOUNT A PERSUASIVE DEFENSE TO POSSIBLE CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS. EVEN SO WE EXPECT FLAK. A THREE-MAN LIAISON GROUP JUST COULD NOT HANDLE THE WORK AND ITS OWN ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS; AUGMENTING IT BY ONE OR TWO MIGHT BE A POSSIBILITY. END SUMMARY.

2. CONSIDERING PUBLIC OPINION IN US AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION
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AFFECTING THE US/CHILEAN MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, WE HAVE KEPT

UNDER REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY OF REDUCING OR ABOLISHING MILGP. SO HAS THE GOC. SINCE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS LIKELY OR AT LEAST POSSIBLE THE CHILEANS WILL STILL BE PERMITTED TO MAKE CASH BUYS, WE BELIEVE THERE WILL BE POLITICAL AND MILITARY JUSTIFICATION FOR KEEPING A CONSIDERABLY SMALLER MILGP IN SANTIAGO.

3. (A) FIRST, WE FORESEE MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN CHILE OVER THE NEAR TO MEDIUM TERM, AND THAT US/CHILEAN POLITICAL RELATIONS ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN DIFFICULT. THE RELATIONSHIP MAY DETERIORATE TO THE POINT THAT MILGP SHOULD BE TERMINATED BECAUSE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO, OR ITS PRESENCE MIGHT BECOME INCONSISTENT WITH THE STATE OF POLITICAL RELATIONS (E.G., UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE PASSAGE OF THE KENNEDY AMENDMENT). BARRING THIS, WE BELIEVE THAT MILGP OFFERS A SIGNIFICANT VEHICLE FOR SUPPLEMENTARY ENTRY TO SENIOR GOC LEADERSHIP AND TO INFLUENTIAL MILITARY PERSONS OF ALL RANKS. IN ADDITION, PARTICULARLY DURING PERIODS OF POLITICAL/ DIPLOMATIC TROUBLES, MILGP'S MAINTENANCE OF TRADITIONAL SERVICE-TO-SERVICE RELATIONS HELPS TO MAINTAIN ACCESS AND DIALOGUE.

(B) THE GOC PRESUMABLY WILL BE PERMITTED TO MAKE CASH PURCHASES FROM US AND TO RECEIVE PURCHASED AND PERHAPS FMS CREDIT MATERIAL IN THE PIPELINE (POINTS ARE STILL UNCLEAR). ENOUGH IS COMING, AND WE CAN EXPECT ENOUGH MORE WILL BE ORDERED, TO KEEP MILGP WELL OCCUPIED. WE ASSUME THAT MILGP WILL BE EXPECTED TO ENCOURAGE GOC TO BUY US. SPECIFICALLY: (1) AIR FORCE: A-37 PROGRAM IS NOT YET COMPLETED, AND F-5 AIRCRAFT WILL START ARRIVING IN A FEW MONTHS. (2) ARMY: ALTHOUGH WE HAVE LITTLE IN THE PIPELINE, EXPECTED CASH BUYS (IF PERMITTED UNDER NEW SECURITY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION, AND IF MATERIEL IS AVAILABLE) CAN BE EXPECTED TO GIVE PLENTY OF WORK TO THE ARMY SECTION IN THE FUTURE. (3) NAVY: AGAIN, LITTLE IN THE PIPELINE, BUT THERE WILL BE NORMAL CASH BUYS LARGE ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY A CONTINUED NAVY PRESENCE IN MILGP.

(C) THE GOC WILL ALSO WANT TO BUY SOME TRAINING, WHICH REQUIRES MILGP ADMINISTRATION.

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(D) IN ANY CASE, ELIMINATING MILGP WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY GOC AS ANTI-CHILEAN MOVE, NO MATTER WHAT OUR REASON. WE WANT TO BE SURE THAT IF MILGP IS TERMINATED, THE SIGNAL TO THE GOC WILL BE THE ONE WE WANT IT TO RECEIVE.

4. RECOMMENDED OPTIONS: WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, JUSTIFY CONTINUING MILGP AT ITS PRESENT AUTHORIZED LEVEL OF 15 POSITIONS, WHICH WAS SET WHEN CHILE WAS GETTING ABOUT \$800,000 GRANT TRAINING

AND \$15 MILLION FMS CREDITS ANNUALLY. MILGP AND EMBASSY HAVE COORDINATED CLOSELY IN RECENT PERSONNEL ACTIONS TO TAILOR MILGP PERSONNEL TO A REDUCED PROFILE. THE PROJECTED MILGP WOULD CONSIST OF: (A) HEADQUARTERS ELEMENT IN THE CHANCERY -- AN ARMY COLONEL AND MARINE LTCOL ADMINISTRATIVE/PLANS OFFICER WHO ALSO WOULD HANDLE LIAISON WITH CHILEAN MARINES, AND AN ADMINISTRATIVE NCO (NAVY YNC); (B) OPERATIONAL ELEMENT LOCATED IN CHILEAN DEFENSE MINISTRY - WITH ONE LTCOL/CMDR FOR EACH SERVICE PLUS ONE LOGISTICS NCO (AIR FORCE). WE ENVISAGE MILGP DROPPING TO 8 BY JULY/AUGUST 1977, REDUCING PERSONNEL TURBULENCE AND AVOIDING SUDDEN DROP IN MILGP EFFICIENCY. THE AIR FORCE F-5 INSTRUCTOR PILOT ARRIVING SHORTLY WOULD STAY TWO YEARS. ON HIS DEPARTURE, THE MILGP COMPLETMENT WOULD DROP TO SEVEN.

5. PLUSES/MINUSES

(A) ADVANTAGES: WE BELIEVE THAT CUTTING PERSONNEL ABOUT IN HALF -- TO A TOTAL OF EIGHT POSITIONS -- WOULD GIVE US A LEAN STAFF THAT COULD HANDLE MILGP'S MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDE USEFUL SUPPLEMENT ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PERHAPS EVEN SURVIVE AFTER SEPTEMBER 1977. THIS COMPLEMENT WOULD BE BELOW THE DOUBLE FIGURE, AND IT WOULD INCLUDE ONLY ONE COLONEL (NAVY CAPTAIN), RATHER THAN THE PRESENT FOUR. BOTH POINTS ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT. OVERALL PRESENCE WOULD BE LARGE ENOUGH TO SHOW CHILE THE USG'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN MILITARY/SECURITY COOPERATION, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME OFFERING THE MINIMUM TARGET FOR ANTI-GOC FORCES.

(B) DISADVANTAGES: NO MATTER THE SIZE OF A MILGP/SANTIAGO, IT WILL ATTRACT ATTENTION OF ANTI-JUNTA FORCES IN US.

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6. DISCARDED OPTION: THREE-OFFICER LIAISON GROUP.

(A) ADVANTAGE: ONLY BETTER THAN NO GROUP AT ALL.

(B) DISADVANTAGES: THREE OFFICERS COULD NOT ADEQUATELY PERFORM TRADITIONAL MILGP FUNCTIONS. WE NEED MORE PEOPLE IF WE ARE TO MEET OUR NEED FOR A MILITARY PRESENCE WITH THIS CHILEAN GOVERNMENT. FINALLY, THREE OFFICERS WOULD SPEND TOO HIGH A PORTION OF THEIR TIME DOING ESSENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT CHORES.

7. POSSIBLE OPTION: LIAISON ELEMENT PLUS ONE/TWO: WHILE HARDLY THE IDEAL, WE BELIEVE WE COULD LIMP THROUGH WITH THREE OFFICERS, AN ADMINISTRATION POSITION AND, ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL WHILE THE A-37 AND F-5 PROGRAMS ARE ON, ONE

INSTRUCTOR PILOT.
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